

# THE SCOTTISH ABBEYS AND THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE:

## A FOOTNOTE

BY THE REV. D. E. EASSON, B.D., PH.D.

THIS article is in the nature of a footnote, because it does not profess to be exhaustive and because it is concerned more especially with the remarks of certain writers who have dealt with the part played by Scottish churchmen in the War of Independence, but have made no attempt to differentiate the attitude manifested by the monks from that of the secular clergy of the period. For these writers, it would seem, Maurice, abbot of Inchaffray, blessing the Scottish army before Bannockburn, is as typical a figure as David, bishop of Moray, who, at an earlier stage of the War, preached that those who aided King Robert as insurgents against the king of England and the English were no less meritorious than if they had gone on crusade against pagans and Saracens.<sup>1</sup> Thus, MacEwen, writing as an ecclesiastical historian, declares :

“From the beginning of the struggle Scottish bishops and abbots were prominent as statesmen and diplomatists, and, when the time came for fighting, they furnished the sinews of war and led the Scots in battle.”<sup>2</sup>

“The fact that bishops and abbots ignored ecclesiastical obligations and defied the persuasions and threats of the highest Church authority went far to determine the issue of the war.”<sup>3</sup>

Again, Barron, writing as a secular historian, has these statements:

“ . . . Throughout the long struggle, priest and bishop, monk and friar, were in the forefront of the resistance to England, and we have repeatedly seen . . . how powerful an influence they exerted. . . . We have seen, too, how they used the knowledge and the

<sup>1</sup> Palgrave, *Documents and Records illustrating the History of Scotland*, p. 330 (No. CXLVIII). The same was said of the bishop of Glasgow (*ibid.*, p. 348). The Lanercost chronicler, writing with a strong English bias, declares this was the practice of Scottish prelates and preachers (*Chron. Lanercost*, pp. 165-166).

<sup>2</sup> *History of the Church of Scotland*, I, p. 253.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 256. MacEwen (*ibid.*, p. 254) mentions the case of the abbot of Jedburgh, “ who with some of his canons favoured the English side.” He appears to regard this as exceptional and adduces no parallels.

power which was theirs, proud bishop, parish priest, cloistered monk and humble friar, to preach a Holy War against England and the English.”<sup>1</sup>

These pronouncements, it may be said at this point, are partially true, partially exaggerated and indiscriminating. It is, however, fair to add that their writers had not consulted English ecclesiastical records<sup>2</sup> which are of considerable importance for indicating the part played by the Scottish abbeys, at least in the preliminary phases of the War, and which, once scrutinised, prompt us to reconsider the sources, e.g., those edited by Palgrave and Bain, which have been for long accessible.

I take as the approximate period under consideration the forty years from 1290 to 1330, covering the disputed succession to the Scottish Crown, the accession and abdication of Balliol, the occupation of Scotland by Edward I, the resistance movement of Wallace, and the twenty-three years of Robert I's reign of which only the last saw Scotland officially at peace with England. It will be convenient to examine such evidence as is available under three heads: (1) the relations of the monasteries with the English Crown as shown by English state papers; (2) their relations with the English Crown as shown by ecclesiastical records; (3) their relations with Robert I as indicated chiefly by monastic charters. At certain points a comparison can be made between the monks and the secular clergy.

## I

The Scottish monasteries entered into relations with the English Crown in various circumstances. From 1292, the year in which Edward I adjudged the kingdom to Balliol, they are found obtaining protection from the English king. Thus, on 12 December of that year, protection was given to the Knights Templars in Scotland,<sup>3</sup> and in 1296, to Melrose and Coldingham and the nunneries of St. Leonard's, Berwick and Eccles.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Scottish War of Independence* (2nd ed.), pp. 377-378. These statements, *pace* Dr. Barron, concede a good deal to the English account of the attitude of Scottish churchmen; cf. *Chron. Lanercost*, pp. 165-166, and the articles propounded to the Pope against Bishop William de Lamberton which speak of “les riotes et les empeschementz . . . en Escoce . . . dont le dit Evesque et l'Evesque de Glasgu ensemblement od les autres du clerge d'Escoce sont principaux abbettours et meinteinours a tot lour poer” (Palgrave, *op cit.*, pp. 339-340).

<sup>2</sup> *Register of John de Halton, Bishop of Carlisle* (1292-1324), I, published by the Canterbury and York Society in 1913. The first edition of MacEwen's work (Vol. I) was issued in that year; the second in 1915. Barron's first edition was published in 1914; the second in 1934.

<sup>3</sup> Bain, *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland*, II, 635.

<sup>4</sup> *Rotuli Scotiae*, I, p. 23.

Similarly, religious houses invoked King Edward's aid in recovering their lands and other possessions. On 2 September, 1296, royal mandates for the restitution of lands were issued—in what circumstances cannot be said—to St. Andrews, Inchcolm, Holyrood, Coupar Angus and the nunneries of St. Leonard's, Perth and Manuel;<sup>1</sup> while on 23 November of that year, Edward I ordered his Treasurer in Scotland to investigate the claims of the Franciscans in the towns of Berwick, Roxburgh, Haddington, Dumfries and Forfar.<sup>2</sup> Laymen took advantage of the unsettled times to resume possession of lands granted to the religious by their ancestors. Thus, Melrose, in the early years of the thirteenth century, prays the English king and his Council to maintain rights in Eskdale, where Sir Nichol de Graham and Sir John, his son, whose forbears had granted this land to the abbey, had ejected its people.<sup>3</sup> Again, like many of the lay magnates, the Scottish monasteries had possessions in England of which they were liable to be deprived in a time of hostilities. The monks of Arbroath, who for long had held the church of Haltwhistle in Tynedale and, from March, 1304, were seeking to have it restored to them, appeal to King Edward in or about January, 1306/7, since "they have no other head to maintain their rights than him and his Council," to command its restitution, as they have been forcibly despoiled of it by the bishop of Durham.<sup>4</sup> Again, we find the Scottish religious houses craving the grant of material for the repair of "war damage." On 19 October, 1305, Jedburgh obtained from the English king and his Council oaks from the forest of Plateir to repair the church and buildings of their priory of Restennet, which had been in great part destroyed and burned in the War;<sup>5</sup> and Melrose, at an unspecified date, made a plea on similar grounds for timber from Selkirk forest.<sup>6</sup> We likewise encounter payments to monasteries of considerable sums for lead "which the king caused to be stripped from their churches" (e.g., £78-16-8 to St. Andrews Priory and £55-3-4 to Dunfermline Abbey).<sup>7</sup> Payment, made as late as 8 April, 1310, to the canons of Holyrood "for their goods which had been carried away,"<sup>8</sup> was apparently compensation for the results of spoliation by the English.<sup>9</sup> A further occasion of approach to Edward I was the elec-

*Rotuli Scotiae*, I, p. 24 foll.

<sup>2</sup> Bain, *op cit.*, II, 856.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1981.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1543, 1892. The petition, despite the monks' promise that they will be ever ready to obey the king's order for their benefit, is significantly endorsed "Ponatur inter dormientes." The church was eventually restored to them, 25 May, 1329 (*Ibid.*, III, 985).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1428, 1704.    <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1982.    <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1654, 1687.

<sup>8</sup> *Rotuli Scotiae*, I, p. 81.

<sup>9</sup> Payments to the abbots of Jedburgh and Melrose and the prioresses of Coldstream and Eccles in 1308 (Bain, *op. cit.*, III, 55) may have been made in similar circumstances.



tion of abbots. Thus, on 21 September, 1296, the canons of Jedburgh sought the king's confirmation of the election of William de Jarum as their head;<sup>1</sup> and the earl of Surrey, guardian of Scotland, was ordered to invest him with the temporalities on condition of his taking the oath of fealty.<sup>2</sup> Three years later (8 August, 1299) Kelso is permitted to elect a successor to their abbot, Richard (who, in English reckoning, is "a rebel and an enemy"), the royal assent to the monks' nomination being made with the same proviso.<sup>3</sup> Not infrequently, the Scottish abbey had occasion to ask facilities for monks going to or journeying through England on the business of their houses; e.g., on 11 June, 1303, a monk of Coupar Angus, on his way to Cîteaux, has letters of passage given him;<sup>4</sup> and it is somewhat surprising to find a safe-conduct granted, on 30 January, 1312/13, to Maurice, abbot of Inchaffray, who is coming to and returning from England, with his retinue.<sup>5</sup> Finally, the monasteries approached the English king for the grant of various privileges and favours. Dunfermline Abbey asks and obtains (28 March, 1305) the right to hold a weekly market and a yearly fair at Kirkcaldy;<sup>6</sup> and about the same time Coldingham is granted a similar privilege.<sup>7</sup> So far as the existing records show, the monasteries had far more frequent dealings with the English authorities in the interests of protection and privilege than the secular clergy.<sup>8</sup> But if their numerous approaches to the English king were a virtual recognition of him as *de facto* ruler of Scotland, they had urgent reasons (as will be seen) for making them.

We pass to consider a more comprehensive instance of the dealings of the monasteries with the English Crown, viz., the fealties made by them—and indeed by the clergy, nobility and commons of Scotland—in 1296, recorded in the so-called *Ragman Roll*.<sup>9</sup> An analysis of the entries shows that from 6 July to 28 August of that year fealty and submission

<sup>1</sup> Bain, *op. cit.*, II, 837.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 839.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1087, 1105. The abbot-elect is said to have been an Englishman, who (according to a record of 5 October, 1315) wasted the goods of the monastery and of its dependent priory of Lesmahagow (*Calchou*, 188).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1368. Coupar was an abbey of the Cistercian Order.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 300. The abbot's business was possibly, but by no means certainly, connected with the parish of Negasc, held by Brackley Hospital, Northamptonshire, and latterly by Magdalen College, Oxford (*Inchaffray*, p. xlviil foll.).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1624, 1653.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1650, 1652.

<sup>8</sup> Instances of the petitions of seculars are those of Adam, chaplain of Moray, for his stipend as a chantry priest; the bishop of Aberdeen for restitution of losses in war; John de Spalding, canon of Elgin, for oaks to build Duffus church (*Ibid.*, IV, 1815).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 823.

were made for themselves and their convents by twenty-five abbots (out of about thirty),<sup>1</sup> three priors of larger houses (out of five) and three of small or dependent priories (out of about fifteen whose fealty in some cases may have been regarded as covered by that of the larger houses to which they were subject), seven prioresses (out of ten), the master of the Templars and the warden of the Hospitallers, the minister and masters of four houses of Trinitarians and the masters of two Augustinian hospitals. The northern monasteries of Beaulieu, Fearn, Pluscarden, Urquhart and Kinloss, as well as those of Iona and Saddell in the West and those of Glenluce and Souleseat in Galloway, apparently made no appearance; nor is there any mention of the Franciscan, Dominican or Carmelite friars, although this is probably due to the fact that as Mendicants they had no feudal status. In contrast, five bishops (including one, Whithorn, under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of York) of the ten who occupied sees on the Scottish mainland attended; and one hundred and twenty-two other secular clergy, most of them parochial, are named in the Roll. About seventy per cent. of the latter came from south of the Forth; the dean and chancellor of Moray and the succentor and "provender" of Ross are among the few northern representatives. For purposes of comparison, it is only necessary to mention that in the diocese of St. Andrews alone, there were about two hundred and thirty parish clergy<sup>2</sup> (less than half of these south of the Forth). Without entering on further detail, we may conclude that a large proportion of the Scottish monasteries were careful to make fealty to King Edward; while the number of secular clergy—and it includes an unknown element of English or English-sympathising priests presented to Scottish benefices<sup>3</sup>—who took the oath was relatively meagre. That such and such a cleric swore fealty is not a fact that can be overstressed, for it was a notorious feature of the period that fealties were repeatedly made and repeatedly renounced. But there can be little doubt that, in 1296, most of the monks and nuns made it their business to profess their loyalty to Edward I.

<sup>1</sup> Excluding heads of English houses (e.g., Durham) with interests in Scotland who appear in the Roll.

<sup>2</sup> 231 parishes are given in the list which appears *Aberbrothoc*, I, pp. 232-240. This record probably belongs to the period c. 1400, but few, if any, new parishes were created during the fourteenth century.

<sup>3</sup> Edward I, on 10 October, 1296, sent a mandate to his officials in Scotland to present to benefices suitable persons provided they were English and dwelt in the country (*Cal. Patent Rolls*, 1292-1301, p. 205). Lists of presentations to Scottish benefices by that king from 1298 to 1304 are given in Bain, *op. cit.*, II, 1008, 1017, 1023, 1090, 1104, 1529. None of these presentees were in the least likely to have the hardihood of Thomas, chaplain of Edinburgh, who appears, 19 June, 1296, as having excommunicated Edward I with bell, book and candle (*Ibid.*, II, 822).

The cases of three Scottish abbeys call for special mention. Jedburgh, precariously situated near the Border, had many dealings with the English authorities, was frequented by English officials and seems to have been occupied, from about 1296, by an English abbot and canons (an uncertain number) of the same nationality; for after 1309, William de Jarum, who had been elected abbot with Edward I's approval,<sup>1</sup> and five of the canons had fled to England and were housed in the abbey of Thornton-on-Humber, where William died before 10 January, 1318/19;<sup>2</sup> the remaining fugitives, on their return to Jedburgh, were refused admittance and denounced as apostate and excommunicate by the Scots abbot ruling the house.<sup>3</sup> More difficult to explain is the fact that the monks of Coupar Angus seem to have ingratiated themselves with the "occupying power." On 1 August, 1306, soon after the Battle of Methven, Edward, Prince of Wales, wrote to Aymer de Valence thanking him for the protection given to these monks (for which they have much commended him), as he "esteems them as his own"; and begging him to see that no damage is done to their crops and goods and generally to befriend them.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, Scone fared hardly at the hands of the English. Not only was the abbey destroyed by the English forces in 1298,<sup>5</sup> but, on 10 November, 1306, Edward I petitioned the Pope to have this house, which was "placed in the midst of a perverse nation," transferred to another site.<sup>6</sup> Why Scone was thus singled out for destruction must be left to conjecture; but, after Bruce's coronation, Thomas, its abbot, was regarded as one of the prominent Scottish rebels—the only abbot to be outstanding in that regard—and taken, like the bishops of St. Andrews and Glasgow, as a prisoner to England, where, on 7 August, 1306, he was ordered to be placed in iron fetters in the castle of Mere.<sup>7</sup>

## II

In 1274, the Council of Vienne imposed upon Christendom a levy of a tenth of the revenues of ecclesiastical benefices for the Holy Land, i.e., for a Crusade. One result was the appointment, on 20 September, 1274, of Baiamund di Vicci—whose name is linked, though inaccurately, with

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> Bain, *op. cit.*, III, 112, 563, 630.

<sup>3</sup> *Calendar of Papal Registers*, II, p. 245.

<sup>4</sup> Bain, *op. cit.*, II, 1809.

<sup>5</sup> *Scon*, 124.

<sup>6</sup> Rymer, *Foedera*, I, p. 1003.

<sup>7</sup> Bain, *op. cit.*, 1817. Cf. *Chron. Lanercost*, p. 205, where he is mentioned as "qui . . . Roberto in honore regio suscepto astiterat."



*Bagimont's Roll*<sup>1</sup>—as collector-general of the tenth in Scotland.<sup>2</sup> A further outcome was the offer by Pope Gregory X to any king who took the cross of the yield of the tenth in his dominions;<sup>3</sup> and the subsequent grant by this Pope to Edward I of the tenth of England, Wales and Ireland, and of Scotland if its king should consent, on condition that the English king should take the cross, no payment to be made to him till he was ready to depart.<sup>4</sup> The consent of Alexander III of Scotland was not forthcoming. Moreover, Edward I, preoccupied by campaigns in Wales and Gascony, took no step towards going in person on crusade. But the intermittent negotiations between the English king and the papacy, during the pontificates of Honorius IV<sup>5</sup> and Nicholas IV issued ultimately in a provisional grant, by the latter Pope, on 7 October, 1289, to Edward of the tenth of the British Isles, on conditions which were mainly acceptable to the king.<sup>6</sup> Further, on 10 January, 1289/90, Pope Nicholas renewed this grant, with the proviso that it was to be paid according to the "true value" of benefices;<sup>7</sup> and, on 18 March, 1290/1, made it payable for six years from the next Midsummer.<sup>8</sup> On the latter date also the Pope issued a mandate to the bishops of Carlisle and Caithness, in respect of Scotland—

"to warn and induce all persons not exempt to pay to the king (Edward I) the tenth ordered to be collected for the Holy Land during six years, under such compulsion as may be necessary, and to tax the value as the churches and their rectors in these parts may be able to bear and endure it."<sup>9</sup>

Likewise, he exhorted the bishops and clergy of Scotland to give the tenth of their benefices to Edward, king of England, for six years, as he purposed to go on crusade at the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (24 June), 1293.<sup>10</sup>

Nicholas IV was thus inaugurating another collection for a crusade—and incidentally for the benefit of Edward I—on a different basis of taxation from that of Baiamund.<sup>11</sup> That notable collector of the papal

<sup>1</sup> This name was applied to a valuation of benefices of a date "not much earlier than the Reformation" (*Reg. Halton*, I, p. xii).

<sup>2</sup> *Cal. Pap. Reg.*, Letters, I, p. 449.

<sup>3</sup> Lunt, *Financial Rels. of the Papacy with England*, p. 334. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

<sup>5</sup> On 15 March, 1286/87, Honorius IV granted Edward I the tenth in Scotland if he went to the Holy Land (*Bain, Documents*, II, 313).

<sup>6</sup> *Cal. Pap. Reg.*, Letters, I, p. 504. He had at some date between 3 April, 1287, and 22 February, 1287/88, taken the cross (Lunt, "Papal Taxation in England," *English Hist. Review*, XXX, p. 412).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 509. <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 551. <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 552.

<sup>10</sup> *Bain, Documents*, II, 469; cf. *Cal. Pap. Reg.*, Letters, I, p. 552.

<sup>11</sup> On this, see *Reg. Halton*, I, pp. xiv, xix.

tenth in Scotland had, in any case, died, before 16 September, 1291.<sup>1</sup> Of his successors-designate, the bishops of Carlisle and Caithness, the former, in 1291, was Ralph de Irton, who was succeeded in 1292, by John de Halton; the latter, in 1291, was Alan, an Englishman, who, however, died before 26 October of that year and the see was vacant till 1296.<sup>2</sup> The effective agent of the collection in Scotland was thus Bishop Halton, whose Register supplies valuable information on the methods by which the levy was raised in the period of Edward I's overlordship and until the development of the War frustrated its ingathering.

The organisation devised by Halton as principal collector of the Holy Land subsidy in Scotland was based on the diocesan framework of the country. But, except in the diocese of Dunblane<sup>3</sup> and in a few other cases,<sup>4</sup> he did not utilise the bishops or other secular clergy to carry out the collection of the tenth. As his sub-collector in each diocese, he appointed the abbot (or prior) and monks (or canons regular) of one of the larger monasteries, i.e., to act corporately in this capacity. Sometimes, but not invariably, the community thus employed was situated in the diocese where it was responsible for the collection. In the case of the extensive diocese of St. Andrews, the task was divided between two monasteries, one for the archdeaconry of St. Andrews (north of the Forth) and another for the archdeaconry of Lothian. Frequently, it appears, the abbeys acted in this capacity for a limited time and in turn. Thus, Jedburgh is mentioned in 1294 as having collected in the diocese of Glasgow for the first two years of the subsidy.<sup>5</sup> In the same year, Dunfermline has been sub-collector in the archdeaconry of St. Andrews for the second year of the subsidy;<sup>6</sup> while Coldingham, in 1295, figures similarly in the archdeaconry of Lothian for the fourth year's collection.<sup>7</sup> Tongland, in 1294, has collected in the diocese of Whithorn for the third year,<sup>8</sup> and in 1295, for the fourth year of the levy.<sup>9</sup> While the dean and chapter of Dunblane had collected in that diocese for the first and second years, the raising of the subsidy there for the third year was, in 1294,

<sup>1</sup> *Scottish History Socy. Miscellany*, VI, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Dowden, *Bishops of Scotland*, p. 239.

<sup>3</sup> Protections are given by Edward I, 9 March, 1292, to Master Walter, archdeacon, and Geoffrey, treasurer of Dunblane, as collectors of the tenth (*Rotuli Scotiae*, i, p. 7).

<sup>4</sup> Protection is given, 16 June, 1292, to John de Spalding, canon of Aberdeen (*Ibid.*, I, p. 8), who, 14 March, 1294/5, had a commission from Bishop Halton to receive gifts and bequests for the Crusade in the dioceses of Aberdeen, Moray, Ross, Caithness and Argyle (*Reg. Halton*, I, p. 28). On 4 August, 1294, Master William de Morton had a similar commission for dioceses north of the Forth (*Ibid.*, I, p. 18).

<sup>5</sup> *Reg. Halton*, I, p. 21.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 16.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 43.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 22.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 42.



ordered to be undertaken by Scone and Dunfermline.<sup>1</sup> In 1294, Arbroath appears as having acted in the dioceses of Dunkeld and Aberdeen for the second year,<sup>2</sup> while Coupar Angus took over the third year's levy of Dunkeld<sup>3</sup> and the fourth year's of the diocese of Brechin.<sup>4</sup> Although the names of the sub-collectors in the dioceses of Moray, Ross, Caithness, Orkney and Sodor (except for the Isle of Man) do not appear, the subsidy appears to have been levied in them.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, in 1294, the abbot and convent of Inchaffray (along with Alpin of Strathearn, treasurer of Scotland) were commissioned to receive the account of the dioceses of Orkney and Sodor and

"to compel the collectors of the tenth there to the payment of the same, depositing (the amount) in the foresaid monastery of Inchaffray, at the peril of the abbot and convent of the same place."<sup>6</sup>

Again, the abbot of Jedburgh, in 1295, was appointed to audit and receive the account for the fourth year of the collectors of the tenth in the dioceses of Brechin, Dunblane, Moray, Aberdeen, Ross, Orkney, Caithness and Sodor;<sup>7</sup> while it was at Jedburgh, in the same year, that the collectors, on certain specified days, were to give in a statement of their receipts.<sup>8</sup> Professor Tout concludes from Halton's Register that

"after the outbreak of war in 1296, any real attempt to collect monies from the remote parts of Scotland seems to have been abandoned";<sup>9</sup>

and, in 1301, the bishop himself was displaced from his office of principal collector and the abbot of Waltham and the dean of St. Paul's were appointed in his stead.<sup>10</sup> But, by a bull of 2 August, 1305, Pope Clement V ordained the collection of yet another crusading tenth;<sup>11</sup> and the bishops of Lincoln and London, who were made chief collectors for the whole of the British Isles, on 21 April, 1306, nominated Halton and John de Sandale, Edward I's chamberlain in Scotland, as deputy-

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Halton*, I, pp. 18-19.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 16.

<sup>3</sup> *Coupar Angus*, I, LXIV, where it is mentioned that Arbroath had collected in the previous year.

<sup>4</sup> *Reg. Halton*, I, p. 57.    <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 35.    <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 21.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 44-45.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 35-36. By this time the sums collected were ordered by Pope Boniface VIII to be paid to certain Italian merchants, who reported on them to Halton (*Ibid.*, I, pp. 61-62).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. xxi.    <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. xxi.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 254-256. This bull was supplemented by another of 1 August, 1306, according to which the first year's revenues were to go to Edward I and the second year's to Edward, prince of Wales (*Foedera*, I, pp. 191-192).

collectors of the Scottish portion of the subsidy.<sup>1</sup> On this second occasion, Halton once more turned to the Scottish monasteries, employing their abbots (but omitting their monks) as sub-collectors; and an entry in his Register of the "names of the collectors of the tenth imposed by the lord Pope Clement in Scotland" gives these particulars for the various dioceses; the abbots of Holyrood and Newbattle are responsible for St. Andrews south of the Forth; those of Dunfermline and Coupar for the same north of the Forth; those of Kelso and Jedburgh for Glasgow; the abbot of Cambuskenneth for Dunblane; the abbot of Arbroath for Brechin; the prior of Pluscarden for Moray; the abbot of Tongland for Whithorn; the abbot of Scone for Dunkeld; the abbot of Lindores for Aberdeen; the abbot of Kinloss for Ross; the abbot of Inchaffray for Argyle; the abbot of Rushen (in the Isle of Man) for Sodor; while no collector is named for Caithness.<sup>2</sup> How far and for how long Halton succeeded in raising any revenues in Scotland at this time, when the influence of Bruce was in the ascendant, does not transpire in the Register; nor is it clear how the abbots played their part. All we know is that Halton took action, on 31 July, 1307, against the abbots of Rushen and Tongland regarding arrears in the tenth of the diocese of Sodor and Whithorn.<sup>3</sup> But it has been pointed out that these dioceses

"were probably the only districts within his sphere in which, by this date, he had much chance of collecting money at all ;<sup>4</sup>

and, in September, 1308, there were still considerable sums, collected for the earlier sixth year's tenth, remaining in the coffers of monastic sub-collectors.<sup>5</sup> On 12 March, 1300/01, Pope Boniface VIII had released to the English king all that had accrued for the Crusade;<sup>6</sup> but there is no means of ascertaining the total sum received by the English crown from the collections of tenths in Scotland. Of the portion of the subsidy (nearly £7000) remaining in the hands of the monasteries in 1308, Tout suggests—

"it is more likely that it found its way into the coffers of Robert I than to those of Edward II."<sup>7</sup>

The latest item recorded is that of 12 March, 1309/10, when the financial statement of the English bishops who were principal collectors of Clement V's tenth showed that their commissaries could account for £1833-5-4½ from Scottish benefices (for the first year and first term of the second year of the subsidy) "and no more on account of the War."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Halton*, I, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 267-268.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 288-289.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. xxiv.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 300.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 252-253.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. xxii.

<sup>8</sup> Bain, *Documents*, III, 127.

The monastic sub-collectors were generally armed with the power of inflicting excommunication upon recalcitrants or those who fell into arrears of payment. Thus, on 4 August, 1294, the abbot of Coupar Angus was given commission to deal with those clerics in the diocese of Dunkeld who were in arrears for the first, second and third years of the levy, to compel payment of arrears by ecclesiastical censures, and to punish those who refused or hindered the payment of arrears and likewise to absolve those who are excommunicate after they had made adequate payment.<sup>1</sup> On 18 July, 1295, the abbot of Jedburgh was likewise given powers to absolve parish priests who were excommunicate for failure to pay their tenths.<sup>2</sup> But although, in these cases, Halton reserved to himself the right of absolving bishops and other dignitaries, he issued to the abbot of Lindores a mandate (5 August, 1294) to denounce the bishop of Dunkeld excommunicate in that bishop's cathedral church, in the larger places in his diocese, in the abbey church of Scone, the church of Perth and elsewhere,<sup>3</sup> and repeated the injunction at a later date;<sup>4</sup> while on 23 January, 1295/6, the abbot of Tongland was ordered to warn the bishop of Whithorn, under pain of interdict, to pay his arrears within a month.<sup>5</sup>

From records of this type preserved in the Register, we can gain some idea of the reaction of the secular clergy to the demand for payment of the tenth. It is true that some sub-collectors could obtain an acquittance for the proceeds of the levy in the diocese assigned to them; yet the sums which Halton thus acknowledged did not preclude the mounting up of large arrears. In 1294, Jedburgh, in respect of the diocese of Glasgow, had an acquittance for £195-2-5; but in the following year, arrears amounted to £1073-19-8, of which £587-13-1½ was in the abbey's custody and £486-16-6¾ in the hands of its debtors.<sup>6</sup> Default was common nor was it confined to the secular clergy; for there are instances of monasteries which had failed to contribute their own quota. Thus Melrose, on 8 August, 1294, was given a dispensation in respect of the previous three years' tenths;<sup>7</sup> and Kelso obtained a respite, regarding the third year's tenth, till Martinmas—

“under the penalty contained in the papal bull if they have not paid in full by the time aforesaid.”<sup>8</sup>

It is evident, however, that the levy was resisted or avoided more especially by certain of the bishops and secular clergy. In Dunblane diocese, the dean and chapter collected the subsidy for the first two years;<sup>9</sup> but, on 6 August, 1294, the abbots of Dunfermline and Scone were bidden to

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Halton*, I, pp. 17-18.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 13.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 36.    <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 64-65.    <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 17, 42.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 20.    <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 18.    <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 18.



proceed against the bishop and clergy of that diocese for the third year's tenth<sup>1</sup>—the suggestion seems to be that they had shown recalcitrance. The diocese of Dunkeld appears to have been peculiarly resistant to the imposition. Among the Coupar Angus charters is a monition of 31 March, 1294, directed by the abbot and convent of that abbey, collectors of the third year's tenth, to the rural dean of Athole, enjoining him to denounce as excommunicate the dean, chancellor and various rectors and prebendaries, including one of the latter who had already been excommunicated by the collectors of the second year's tenth, the abbey and convent of Arbroath.<sup>2</sup> Above all, on 5 August, 1294, Halton writes to the bishop of St. Andrews, expressing his surprise (*vehementer admiramus*) that he has not paid his tenth and urging him to do so, 'lest we may be compelled, though unwillingly, to proceed against your person';<sup>3</sup> while the bishop of Glasgow is addressed in similar terms and bidden also to compel the archdeacon of Teviotdale to pay his tenth for the previous two years.<sup>4</sup> We may take it that Halton's letter, in 1295, to the Scottish bishops, ordering them to denounce as excommunicate and to place under interdict, with sequestration of their goods, those abbots, priors, rectors and other religious and churchmen, who had not made payment of their tenths,<sup>5</sup> led to no vigorous action. Scottish bishops and priests, with a few exceptions, were unlikely—and more unlikely as time went on—to lend themselves willingly, at the dictation of an English bishop, to the contribution of subsidies which were destined to finance the invader and oppressor of their country. The monks may have had the excuse that they were acting under the bidding of the Pope; and in the south of Scotland, at least, where the abbeys had strong inducement to be pro-English, it is not surprising that Halton found their inhabitants apt instruments of his designs. At all events, his Register attests the fact that, in the preliminary stages of the struggle with England, the Scottish abbeys did something to "furnish the sinews of war"—but to Edward I.

### III

We proceed to consider the attitude of the monasteries to Robert Bruce from the time of his assumption of the crown of Scotland at Scone on 27 March, 1306. Here the evidence is somewhat limited by the fact that, while a certain number of the crown charters of the reign of Robert I survive, e.g., in monastic chartularies, many of these are known only

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Halton*, I, pp. 19-20.

<sup>2</sup> *Coupar Angus*, I, LXIV.

<sup>3</sup> *Reg. Halton*, I, p. 20.    <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 21.    <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 45.

from entries, brief and often undated, in lists of records which are lost.<sup>1</sup> The king's charters to the monasteries fall into two main categories: those which confirm *de novo* their possessions and privileges—such confirmations must have been sought by the houses which obtained them, a gesture which implied the recognition by the monks of King Robert as the effective ruler of Scotland; those, again, which confer benefactions and privileges upon the monasteries—these testify to the king's favour, which he was not likely to extend to houses which were other than loyal to his crown. It may be significant that the earliest surviving charter granted a Scottish abbey by Robert I, after his coronation, would seem to be that of 1 July, 1309, to Kinloss, in the diocese of Moray, confirming the right which that abbey had received from previous kings of making a channel to lead the water of Masseth to the monastery;<sup>2</sup> and the same abbey, in this or the following year, was granted the whole fishing of the water of Findhorn,<sup>3</sup> while royal confirmations of its possessions and privileges follow on 2 May, 1311, and 2 May, 1312.<sup>4</sup> Kinloss, judging at least from the absence of references to that abbey, had not been forward to cultivate the favour of Edward I.<sup>5</sup> Scone comes next with a royal charter of 12 March, 1311/12, giving its canons immunity from distraint for debt;<sup>6</sup> and on 7 April, 1312, King Robert bestowed upon that abbey the whole thanage of Scone, with the right of holding its own court in it.<sup>7</sup> On 26 February, 1312/13, Arbroath was granted the concession of holding its lands of Tarves in regality<sup>8</sup> and other privileges;<sup>9</sup> and on the following 1 March, the king confirmed donations and liberties bestowed on this abbey by its founder, William the Lion.<sup>10</sup> Inchaffray, on 15 February, 1313/14, had a royal grant of lands in the thanahe of Forteviot.<sup>11</sup> The battle of Bannockburn was fought on 24 June, 1314. On 14 November following, the king granted Dunfermline the church of Kinross and the chapel of Orwell;<sup>12</sup> and a subsequent charter (16 November) concerning this donation reflects, in a somewhat curious manner, his sense of his crown's security—the grant is made—

“in honour of the place of burial of the kings our predecessors . . . and of our place of burial which we have chosen beside them.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These lists are given in Robertson, *Index*, and in *Reg. Magni Sigilli*, I (appendices).

<sup>2</sup> *Kinlos*, pp. 131-132.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.    <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 129-131, 126-128.

<sup>5</sup> The abbot of Kinloss is named by Halton as collector of Clement V's tenth in Ross (*Reg. Halton*, I, p. 268). In all probability, this and other cases are only evidences of Halton's wishful thinking.

<sup>6</sup> *Scon*, 139.    <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.

<sup>8</sup> Thus the abbey gained wider powers of jurisdiction and increased revenues.

<sup>9</sup> *Aberbrothoc*, I, 278.    <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, II, pp. 535-536.

<sup>11</sup> *Inchaffray*, CXXI.

<sup>12</sup> *Dunfermelyn*, 341.    <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 342.

The ensuing years of his reign saw a succession of charters to religious houses. To mention little more than the first appearances of the abbeys in extant records of this period: Melrose had a general protection from the king on 4 April, 1315,<sup>1</sup> and, on 4 May, grants of the land of Lessudden.<sup>2</sup> About the same time, Lindores was given lands in Aberdeenshire;<sup>3</sup> and, on 22 September, Holyrood had confirmation of a tenth of the escheats in Lothian<sup>4</sup> and was later to receive a general confirmation (undated) of its possessions.<sup>5</sup> Deer on 13 February, 1315/16, received a donation of lands in Buchan and the church of Foveran;<sup>6</sup> and, on 4 March following, the king conferred on Cambuskenneth land in Tillicoultry.<sup>7</sup> On 7 October, 1316, Coupar Angus had royal confirmation of a grant of land;<sup>8</sup> while, on 17 December of that year, Paisley obtained a general confirmation of its charters.<sup>9</sup> Newbattle,<sup>10</sup> Kelso,<sup>11</sup> Whithorn,<sup>12</sup> Crossraguel<sup>13</sup> and Culross<sup>14</sup> figure in crown charters from 1320 onwards and there are also undated donations and confirmations in which Kilwinning, Glenluce, Dundrennan and Tongland appear.<sup>15</sup> It is noteworthy that Jedburgh obtained King Robert's confirmation of its possessions on 12 December, 1324,<sup>16</sup> and Coldingham on 14 November, 1327, and 16 March, 1327/28.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, in 1315, the king made a benefaction to the Blackfriars<sup>18</sup> and, late in his reign, to the Greyfriars<sup>19</sup> of his kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> *Melros*, II, 359.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 416-418. Sir John de Graham, who had interfered with Melrose's rights in Eskdale (see *supra*), petitioned King Robert, 31 July, 1309, to grant that abbey sasine of that land (*Ibid.*, II, 380); and the king confirmed this, 25 December, 1317 (*Ibid.*, II, 382).

<sup>3</sup> *Lindores*, CXXVI.

<sup>4</sup> *Liber S. Crucis*, 86.      <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>6</sup> *Reg. Magni Sigilli*, I, App. 2, 27, 28. This abbey had a further grant of the church of King Edward in Banffshire (*Ibid.*, 29).

<sup>7</sup> *Cambuskenneth*, 223.

<sup>8</sup> *Coupar Angus*, I, XCIX. On 8 February, 1319/20, Robert I gave this abbey lands in the thanage of Alyth (*Ibid.*, I, C). A monk of this house, which earlier had been pro-English, was an emissary of Bruce to Edward II, 12 January, 1320/21 (Bain, *Documents*, III, 718).

<sup>9</sup> *Passelet*, p. 218.

<sup>10</sup> *Neubottle*, 58.

<sup>11</sup> *R.M.S.*, I, App. I, 14.      <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.      <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.      <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 40; I, App. 2, 83-86.      <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, I, App. 1, 92-94.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 19; *North Durham*, LXXXI.

<sup>18</sup> The Friars Preachers of Glasgow were granted twenty merks annually, 28 April, 1315 (*R.M.S.*, I, App. 1, 110). Grants were also made to those of Edinburgh (*Ibid.*, 23), Berwick (*Ibid.*, App. 2, 586, 587), and Ayr (*Ibid.*, App. 2, 618, 619).

<sup>19</sup> Moir Bryce, *Greyfriars*, I, p. 204, etc. The donation was 120 merks annually to be divided among the six houses of Greyfriars.



The celebrated council of 24 February, 1309/10, at which the Scottish clergy recognised Robert, "with whom the people of this realm are willing to live or die," as their lawful king, purports to have included the abbots and priors;<sup>1</sup> but the record does not show how many of these were actually present. What does, however, seem tolerably clear is that from about the time of this recognition of Bruce's *de iure* kingship by the Scottish Church—in itself a notable sign of his growing prestige—the monasteries gradually turned to him for protection and privileges and this despite the fact that, from 1309, he was under sentence of excommunication.<sup>2</sup> More especially, from the time of his victory at Bannockburn, which established his mastery of Scotland, they looked to him as their protector and patron; and in this, to the end of his reign, they were encouraged by the king himself. Witness the explicit declaration of his policy, as protector of the Church, in his parliament at Scone, on 3 December, 1318, when the royal decree ran—

"that the holy Scottish Church should be maintained in peace and with all its rights and liberties in all things and that holy Church and holy religion<sup>3</sup> should be maintained and guarded from all oppressions, burdens and injuries brought upon them before these times; wherefore the lord king wills that none besides should lodge in the houses or granges of the monks or churchmen, to their destruction or the destruction of their goods."<sup>4</sup>

Further, King Robert's letter of 11 May, 1329, to his son, David (the future David II), enjoining him to benefit and protect the abbey of Melrose, where the king's heart is to be buried, is significant not only as revealing that Bruce's religious outlook was typically medieval—this he would have done—

"so that (the monks) may be quickened to pray for us more fervently and more steadfastly";

but as commending his benevolent policy to his son and his successors, as a trust which they must needs fulfil if they would have his blessing and "the blessing of the Son of the King of Kings (*summi Regis*)."<sup>5</sup> King Robert was not only the declared protector, but the last munificent royal benefactor of the religious houses of Scotland. Only one new foundation (and that on a small scale) can be attributed to him—the

<sup>1</sup> *Acts of Parliament of Scotland*, I, p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Halton was ordered by Pope Clement V, in 1309, to excommunicate Bruce for Comyn's murder (*Reg. Halton*, I, p. xxv).

<sup>3</sup> "*Religio*" is probably used here as meaning "monasticism."

<sup>4</sup> *Acts of Parliament*, I, p. 107.

<sup>5</sup> *Melros*, II, 364.

Franciscan friary of Lanark in 1328 or 1329.<sup>1</sup> But, during the later years of his reign, the Scottish monasteries, under his patronage and in the interlude of comparative security he had won for them, took for a little a new lease of life ere the decadence of the fourteenth century overtook them.

#### IV

Our conclusions on the attitude of the monasteries in the period of the War of Independence cannot be other than tentative. The investigation of this question inevitably raises problems which admit only of provisional solutions or which must be left unsolved; and the evidence of records is at best partial and sometimes of doubtful interpretation. Also, in a period which presents both a complicated historical framework and a complex human situation, we cannot expect to find among the monks as a whole a complete uniformity of attitude at any stage of the struggle nor yet an entirely consistent change of attitude during its progress. There was no such uniformity and no such consistent change among the bishops and secular clergy nor yet among the lay magnates of the kingdom. Bishops—and, among them, so early and so strong a partisan of Bruce as William de Lamberton—made, not once but many times, vows of fealty to the English king and, as often, renounced them. Laymen, in like manner, avowed and withdrew their allegiance.<sup>2</sup> Did not Bruce himself do homage, in 1296, to Edward I.<sup>3</sup>?

We can, however, venture to detect a certain approximate pattern in the policy pursued (or improvised) within this period by the Scottish monasteries and, more especially, those of the Lowlands. In the later years of the thirteenth century, they were acting, at the bidding of the Pope, in the interests of Edward I, as well as seeking the protection and favour of the English king. In the decade of Bannockburn and the subsequent years of Robert I's reign, they were cultivating and accepting the protection and patronage of the Scottish king, albeit he lay under the ban of the Roman Church. The motive of this not very subtle policy, with the *volte-face* which it involved, was plainly self-preservation. While Scotland was uneasily submitting to subjugation and occupation, still more when hostilities developed with the successive movements of Wallace and Bruce, the situation of the monasteries became more and more precarious. While, like the lay barons and lairds, they held properties

<sup>1</sup> Moir Bryce, *Greyfriars*, I, p. 240.

<sup>2</sup> There was one conspicuous exception: "Wallace had sworn no oaths and had consequently . . . broken no fealty" (Mackenzie, *Robert Bruce*, p. 141).

<sup>3</sup> His name appears in *Ragman Roll*.

and lands which were liable to be attacked and ravaged by hostile forces, they, unlike these laymen, were defenceless, without fortified dwellings or men at arms to repel assault. The record of the invasion both of Scotland by the English and of England by the Scots amply displays that religious houses were peculiarly vulnerable and under grave risk of spoliation and destruction. Edward I might, as he avowed (about 1199) to the monks of Sweetheart and Melrose, take all religious under his protection.<sup>1</sup> Yet his armies had raided the property of the nunnery of Coldstream in 1296<sup>2</sup> and sacked Scone abbey in 1298.<sup>3</sup> English troops were likewise to destroy much of Dunfermline abbey (except the church) in 1303,<sup>4</sup> to burn Paisley abbey in 1307,<sup>5</sup> to do considerable damage at Kelso (and render the monks homeless) before 1316,<sup>6</sup> and later (1322) to devastate Dryburgh.<sup>7</sup> That the Lowland monasteries, situated often near the routes of invasion, were liable thus to suffer is undeniable; and this was a pretext for, if not a justification of, their dealings with the English king. On the other hand, when Robert I had attained to a position of authority, the motive of self-preservation was no less potent in directing their attitude towards the Scottish monarch. At a time when the Pope counted for little or nothing in Scotland and when, also, the king's hand was heavy against disaffection,<sup>8</sup> the monasteries were careful to seek and ready to accept King Robert's protection and favour. No less, in their often devastated and impoverished state, they availed themselves of his aid in making good the damage and losses they had sustained. It is significant that Bruce's 1314 charter to Dunfermline expressly mentions that the king is taking compassion on the abbey's poverty and the spoliation of its property through war.<sup>9</sup>

It remains to comment on MacEwen's statement which associates the abbots with the bishops as "statesmen and diplomatists" in this period. Here this writer had in mind, e.g., the numerous abbots who were present at the parliament of Brigham, on 17 March, 1289/90.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bain, *Documents*, II, 1123, 1982.

<sup>2</sup> *Coldstream*, p. xiii. It is fair to mention that, in this case, the nuns were given compensation.

<sup>3</sup> *Scone*, 124; see, in this connection, the interesting article, J. S. Richardson, "The Stone of Destiny" (*Scotsman*, 17/2/31).

<sup>4</sup> *Dunfermelyn*, p. xxv.

<sup>5</sup> Mackenzie, *Robert Bruce*, p. 190.

<sup>6</sup> *Calchou*, 309.

<sup>7</sup> *Dryburgh*, p. xiv.

<sup>8</sup> Witness the measures taken by the parliament at Cambuskenneth, 6 November, 1314 (*Acts of Parliament*, I, p. 104), and the "Black" parliament at Scone, August, 1320 (Dunbar, *Scottish Kings*, pp. 136-137).

<sup>9</sup> *Dunfermelyn*, 342.

<sup>10</sup> *Acts of Parliament*, I, p. 85. Cf. MacEwen, *History of the Church in Scotland*, p. 253.



Other such instances can be cited. Thus, in 1305, the abbots of Melrose, Coupar Angus, Jedburgh and Dunfermline were joined with the bishops of St. Andrews, Dunkeld, Aberdeen and Ross, as well as five earls and nine other laymen, to form the king's (i.e. Edward I's) Council in Scotland.<sup>1</sup> But there is nothing unusual in the abbots' presence in parliament or council. They served on both bodies (like the bishops) as members of the clerical estate; it does not follow that they played a prominent part as statesmen. As for diplomacy, we find such an instance as that of the abbot and prior of Arbroath, who, on 23 January, 1295/96, have Edward I's protection while

"returning to Scotland from their late mission to the king on behalf of the king of Scotland (Balliol)."<sup>2</sup>

But there is nothing singular in their employment in this capacity. Only one abbot is really outstanding as an officer of state in this period, viz., Bernard de Linton, abbot of Arbroath, who was Chancellor of Scotland during most of Robert I's reign. But Bernard is mentioned as Chancellor as early as 31 October, 1308;<sup>3</sup> not until 1311 was he abbot of Arbroath;<sup>4</sup> and it seems probable that he was at first a secular clerk, who, as a loyalist, was nominated to Arbroath by King Robert and took monastic vows only on succeeding to that abbey. Barron, again, speaks of monks and friars as "in the forefront of the resistance to England." There may have been "underground" movements with which some of these were associated—we simply do not know. But, as we have seen, there is only one abbot who stands alongside the bishops of St. Andrews, Glasgow and Moray, in identifying himself with Bruce's cause in 1306. Why this abbot, the head of the monastery of Scone, who had made fealty to Edward I in 1296, should ten years later have taken part in King Robert's coronation is an interesting speculation.<sup>5</sup> Of Maurice, abbot of Inchaffray, we know too little to account for his presence with the Scottish forces before Bannockburn. Again, the assumption underlying the statements which I have cited, viz., that abbots and bishops, as fellow-churchmen, may be presumed to have taken a like attitude, is far from justified; nor was there any *a priori* reason why the abbots should have followed the bishops' lead. Frequently, and in matters of much less consequence, bishops and abbots are found pulling different ways; and the regular clergy were "a church within a church," belonging in many cases to orders exempt from episcopal jurisdiction. It may have been that in such a

<sup>1</sup> Palgrave, *Documents*, p. 293.

<sup>2</sup> Bain, *Documents*, II, 839.

<sup>3</sup> Dowden, *Bishops*, p. 282n.

<sup>4</sup> *Aberbrothoc*, I, p. xv.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Richardson, "The Stone of Destiny" (*Scotsman*, 17/2/51).

diocese as Moray, the monks were of the same mind as their bishop.<sup>1</sup> But the fact that they do not figure to any extent in dealings with the English cannot be pressed too far ; for this may only indicate that they were more remote from the scenes of conflict. In dioceses like St. Andrews and Glasgow, it is evident from the episode of the Holy Land subsidy that bishops and abbots were by no means of the same mind. It seems safe to say that not until the Council at Dundee in February, 1309/10, is there a definite indication of unanimity among the clergy as a whole in support of Bruce.<sup>2</sup> Even so, it may not have been entire unanimity until 1314.

It may seem that the purpose of this paper is to assail the reputation of the Scottish monasteries of this period. This is far from being so. The situation of the abbeys was one of extreme difficulty. Their rôle—like that of other sections of the Scottish community—was largely forced on them by circumstances ; and these were created by the real villain of the story—Edward I,<sup>3</sup> whose aggression “wrecked the relations”<sup>4</sup> of Scotland and England and gave rise to the tortuous problems of an occupied country. The primary contention of this paper is that the ecclesiastical history of this period needs to be rewritten, and by someone who is prepared to undertake the considerable task of examining carefully the sources.

<sup>1</sup> Barron has well shown that Northern laymen took a prominent part in the War as partisans of Bruce (*Scottish War of Independence*, *passim*).

<sup>2</sup> Among the bishops who attested their loyalty to Bruce was, e.g., the bishop of Caithness, who, in 1306, had acknowledged that he held his temporality of the English king (Dowden, *Bishops*, p. 241).

<sup>3</sup> One might associate with him the Popes, who, from upholding the rights of Scotland, veered to the English side.

<sup>4</sup> Mackenzie, *Robert Bruce*, p. 348.

